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a layer of ice and snow with the exception of a few mountain peaks.

Mr. Dall, in an elaborate paper on the hydrology of Behring Sea, in *Petermann's Mittheilungen*, concludes that the warm surface water which enters the Polar Sea through Behring Strait is, at most, capable of melting 5100 square inches of ice, and that its influence is consequently insignificant. No branch of the Kuro Siwo enters the Behring Sea, and the currents in the Polar basin to the north of it, are mainly dependent upon the winds. There is no reason to suppose that these drift currents are capable of opening passages through the pack-ice which would enable exploring vessels to reach the Pole or even a very high latitude.

The British Government are considering a plan for the establishment of a meteorological station at Fort Simpson, on the Mackenzie River, to be conducted on the system adopted by the International Polar Conference.

Lake Onega may be considered to mark the natural boundary between Northern Russia and Finland, as regards their geological structure, topographical features, fauna and flora.

MICROSCOPY.¹

THE ACME MICROSCOPES.—These really excellent instruments, combining good workmanship with moderate cost, and built upon a model which comprises many of the most convenient and serviceable of recent improvements in the construction of stands, have passed into the hands of James W. Queen & Co., of Philadelphia, who will act as business agents for their sale, and whose great business facilities cannot fail to secure for them a more general and adequate appreciation and attention than they have yet received. A "No. 4" stand, simpler and smaller than those formerly made, and a "lithological," specially adapted to the examination of rocks, are among the recent additions to the Acme series.

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SCIENTIFIC NEWS.

— A French naval doctor, M. Crevaux, has lately made important explorations in the northern parts of South America, more especially in the valley of the Orinoco and its affluents. Among other facts of observation, he states that the Guaraunos, at the delta of that river, take refuge in the trees when the delta is inundated. There they make a sort of dwelling with branches and clay. The women light, on a small piece of floor, the fire needed for cooking, and the traveler on the river by night often sees with surprise long rows of flames at a considerable height in the air. The Guaraunos dispose of their dead by hanging them

This department is edited by Dr. R. H. WARD, Troy, N. Y.